



## ***Master Plan Amendment #2021-00011***

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Issue: (A) Initiation of a Master Plan Amendment; and (B) Public hearing and consideration of an amendment to the Transportation Master Plan Chapter of the Master Plan to replace the chapter with the Alexandria Mobility Plan Chapter which includes updates to transportation policies, goals and strategies.	Planning Commission Hearing:	October 5, 2021
	City Council Hearing:	October 16, 2021
Staff: <i>Transportation and Environmental Services</i> : Hillary Orr, Deputy Director; Christopher Ziemann, Transportation Planning Division Chief; Megan Oleynik, Long Range Planner		

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, OCTOBER 5, 2021:**

On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to initiate the Master Plan Amendment #2021-00011. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0.

On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the resolution for the Master Plan Amendment #2021-00011. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the recommendations and policies set forth in the proposed amendment.

Chair Macek asked staff to address concerns expressed by several citizens' associations about community input on the implementation of the plan. Staff discussed how data will be used to identify areas with the highest needs to prioritize projects, but that there will be in-depth outreach and ample opportunities for feedback on proposed projects.

Commissioner McMahon described her efforts on the Alexandria Mobility Plan Advisory Committee. She stated that she felt there were several strategies in the plan that addressed vehicular traffic and balancing needs of different modes. She highlighted that the plan is not a full update of the 2016 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, but that it incorporates the spirit and community input provided with that 2016 plan. She expressed that she felt there were some weaknesses in the plan in that some of the recommendations may be in conflict with each other and will need to be worked out with implementation. She expressed overall support and that she felt the plan was an improvement on past efforts.

Commissioner Ramirez expressed overall support for the plan and how it addresses the interconnectivity of transportation in the community and promotes more transportation options.

Chair Macek expressed support of the plan and how it balanced mobility options and worked without existing transportation constraints in Alexandria.

Commissioner Lyle stated her support and expressed why she felt it was appropriate for Commissioner McMahon to vote on this item after her efforts on the advisory committee.

Commissioners supported the addition of the following action in Transit Chapter Strategy 2 as proposed by Transportation Commission, “Explore connecting Alexandria’s transitways with high-capacity transit corridors in Fairfax to help create a more reliable and efficient regional bus network,” with the clarification that this strategy refers to “Fairfax County.”

Speakers:

Judy Noritake, representing Braddock Metro Citizens Coalition, expressed support for the Mobility Plan particularly for promoting safer and more convenient non-vehicular travel options.

## I. OVERVIEW

The Alexandria Mobility Plan (AMP) is the City’s strategic update to the 2008 Transportation Master Plan, part of the City’s Master Plan. By using the term “mobility,” this update emphasizes the importance of providing useful options to allow people to have the freedom to choose how to get around. The AMP is not an exhaustive list of specific projects; instead, it lays out the policies and strategies that will guide transportation decisions for the next ten years in pursuit of enhanced quality of life, sustainability, and equity, centered around the concept of choice.

The scope of the effort was to update the 2008 Streets and Transit Chapters, add a curb space management element to the Parking Chapter, dedicate a new chapter to the concept of Transportation Demand Management (Supporting Travel Options), and fold the 2016 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan into the structure of the AMP. The AMP recognizes the progress, advancements in technology, and opportunities and challenges with regional growth that have occurred since the adoption of the 2008 Plan.

In 2019, staff briefed City Council on the scope of this planning effort. Council direction was to ensure that this Plan continues the City’s strategic focus from the 2008 Transportation Master Plan, the 2014 Complete Streets Policy, the 2017 Vision Zero Policy, and the 2017 Strategic Plan that promote safety and multimodal transportation.

## II. DISCUSSION

The Plan’s core elements include a vision, guiding principles, overarching policies, and chapter specific strategies and policies. The Plan also includes performance measures in the form of plan-level key performance indicators, chapter specific metrics and targets that will enable the City to track progress at achieving the Plan’s vision and guiding principles and addressing the chapter-specific strategies.

**Vision:** Recognizing that both technology and integrated transportation-land use planning offer ways to better connect individuals with where they want to go, the vision for the Alexandria Mobility Plan is: *Safe, seamless, and connected mobility options foster a thriving Alexandria for all.* This vision came from feedback during the first phase of public outreach and an AMP Advisory Committee (AMPAC) visioning workshop. It is a forward-looking vision that incorporates major themes from the outreach as well as the City’s Strategic plan focus to foster a thriving Alexandria for all.

**Guiding Principles:** The guiding principles of the AMP represent the more specific and measurable outcomes that the City hopes to achieve through improvements to transportation and mobility. All components of this Plan seek to advance one or more guiding principles, which, when combined, will help foster ACCESS for Alexandria: Accessible, Connected, Convenient, Equitable, Safe, and Sustainable. Each guiding principle has one or two key performance indicators associated with it, which will be incorporated into the City’s Transportation Dashboard and updated every 3 years, during the life of the Plan.

### Plan Sections:

#### **Executive Summary**

Includes an overview of the Plan as well as all of the strategies and policies.

**Overview:**

Describes the context, vision, and guiding principles of the Plan, as well as four overarching policies that speak to major themes of the Plan and considerations that will need to be taken through implementation. These overarching policies are to promote equity, partnerships, flexibility and resilience, and data-driven approaches.

Each of the following topical chapters feature policies, strategies, actions, and metrics that will enhance choices for the community and address mobility needs.

**Transit**

Focuses on making transit in Alexandria more customer-friendly, reliable, and efficient to better serve existing customers and attract new ones. The chapter lays out strategies to complete the three transitway corridors, implement Alexandria Transit Vision Plan recommendations, transition DASH to a zero-emission fleet, and other means to increase ridership through policy, service, and infrastructure enhancements.

**Smart Mobility**

The Smart Mobility chapter focuses on how the City can incorporate technology into the transportation network. The chapter lays out strategies to better manage traffic, improve safety, and enhance overall mobility through such things as expanding the use of smart signal technology to enable signal adjustments in real time, upgrading the Transportation Management Center to provide better tools for traffic monitoring, developing a framework for pilots that will be relevant across all of transportation, and preparing the city for connected and automated vehicles.

**Streets**

The Streets chapter seeks to identify ways to make City streets function better for all users through strategies that incorporate recent policies and identify new opportunities, with the goal of making the street network more efficient and safer. Strategies include developing a program to reduce speeding and cut-through traffic on local streets, updating the development review process to better consider the needs of all users in new developments and minimize impacts of new developments on the street network, work regionally to reduce regional cut-through traffic, continuing the work of Vision Zero, considering the use of speed cameras and other automated tools to improve safety, and maintain a state of good repair for our streets using a data-driven equitable approach.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle**

The Pedestrian and Bicycle chapter reflects the integration of the 2016 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan Update into the format of the AMP, while tracking progress since 2016 and highlighting the remaining priorities. The chapter includes an updated map of remaining sidewalk gaps with their relative priority and an updated map of existing and planned bicycle facilities, including those identified in recent small area plans.

**Supporting Travel Options**

The Supporting Travel Options chapter focuses on how the City can support alternatives to driving alone through information, incentives, partnerships, and policies. The chapter identifies strategies that aim to increase access to a range of travel options to reduce congestion and

GHG emissions in support of Environmental Action Plan 2040 goals including expanding water transportation options, the creation of mobility hubs to support first/last mile transportation, and the pursuit of regional efforts to manage transportation demand, such as through telework and flexible schedules.

### **Curb Space and Parking**

The Curb Space and Parking chapter focuses on how the City can use parking—both on- and off-street—to help achieve its goals and manage competing demands for limited curb space between vehicles, bikes, buses, freight, pick-ups and drop-offs, and more. It includes strategies that will help guide the management of curb space and parking resources while supporting the City’s commitment to sustainability and quality of life. This chapter includes a framework for prioritizing curb uses in different street contexts, the promotion of a multi-faceted approach to better manage parking availability for both on-street and off-street parking, including pricing and technology, expanding efforts to modernize parking requirements in new developments, and promoting electric vehicle charging opportunities.

### **Appendix I: Implementation**

Includes anticipated time horizons for each action in the Plan.

### **Appendix II: Monitoring**

Includes detailed information about the key performance indicators that tie to the guiding principles as well as baseline information for the chapter metrics, and 3, 6, and 9 year targets.

### **Appendix III: Engagement**

Includes a summary of engagement activities and findings undertaken during the course of the Plan.

This Plan was developed during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, which dramatically changed travel patterns and the way we live our lives. The Plan recognizes that there will always be unknowns and that the City must seek to understand potential scenarios and plan for flexibility, adaptation, and resilience. This Plan also enables the City to track the implications of the pandemic on travel needs over time and determine whether a shift in tactics is necessary to ensure cost-effective investment and that all Alexandrians have access to useful travel choices.

## **III. Community Process**

The Plan was developed with guidance from the City Manager-appointed Alexandria Mobility Plan Advisory Committee (AMPAC), which consists of Transportation Commission members and a representative from the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, the Commission on Persons with Disabilities, the West End Business Association, and the Federation of Civic Associations. The AMPAC met ten times to provide input on the engagement strategy and the Plan content.

An interdepartmental team helped to inform the content of the Plan. It included representatives from Transportation & Environmental Services, Planning & Zoning, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities, Information Technology Services, Alexandria Fire Department, Alexandria Police Department, the Department of Community and Health Services, and Alexandria City Public Schools.

This planning effort entailed several phases of public outreach to collect input between Summer 2019 and Fall 2021:

Phase I: Visioning (online visioning feedback form, Innovation Forum, stakeholder meetings)

Phase II: Priorities (pop-up events, stakeholder meetings, online engagement)

Phase III: Strategy Development (focus groups, Town Hall, feedback form)

Phase IV: Draft Plan Outreach (board/commission meetings, feedback form, online promotion, flyering at supermarkets and vaccine events, email summary to those who provided feedback of proposed changes with opportunity to respond)

Phase V: Final Plan Outreach (board/commission presentations, online promotion)

This outreach identified several major themes including a strong widespread interest in more useful transit service, the need for improved safety for all road users, and concerns about congestion and cut-through traffic in the city.

The feedback form on the draft plan yielded 545 responses. Generally, most respondents (72%) felt that the draft plan addressed at least some of their priorities. Many open-ended responses indicated a desire for improvements that were already included in the draft plan, such as a focus on traffic management or pedestrian and bicycle facilities. As such, no major changes to the Plan were identified. However, many respondents provided detailed feedback to improve the Plan and suggested some additional strategies. Advisory Committee members reviewed and supported the more substantive changes, including adding a strategy on street maintenance, electric vehicle charging, and recognizing the need to prepare for automated vehicles during the life of this Plan. The final version also included more detail regarding implementation, tracking, and Plan updates.

The Alexandria Transit Company Board of Directors and the Commission on Persons with Disabilities endorsed Council's adoption of the AMP. The Commission on Aging, the Environmental Policy Commission, the Traffic and Parking Board, and the Transportation Commission will be considering endorsement at the end of September.

#### **IV. Implementation**

Many initiatives in this Plan will not necessarily require additional resources. However, the policies, strategies, and planned transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks will guide decision-making around grant proposals and CIP development. Every year, staff will report on progress on each of the strategies and every three years staff will present an update to the Transportation Commission on the key performance metrics and chapter level metrics in the Plan. The anticipated lifecycle of this Plan is through 2030. Staff intend to begin a plan update of all chapters in 2028 to align with the target year to achieve the City's Vision Zero goal.

#### **V. Fiscal Impact**

This Plan is not financially constrained. It contains both staff initiatives that can be advanced with existing staff resources and programs and projects that would require funding, such as building out the transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks. This funding is generally acquired through outside grant

opportunities or existing TIP funding. Some efforts may benefit from additional City resources if grant funding does not materialize.

## **VI. Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends approval of a Master Plan amendment to replace the existing Transportation Chapter of the City's Master Plan. The Plan was prepared in close collaboration with the Alexandria Mobility Plan Advisory Committee.

### **Attachments:**

1. Alexandria Mobility Plan Executive Summary
2. Resolution MPA #2021-00011
3. Endorsement Letters

### **Reference:**

[Alexandria Mobility Plan with appendices](#)

## Overview

The Alexandria Mobility Plan (AMP), a strategic update to the 2008 Transportation Master Plan, focuses on expanding high-quality transportation choices so transportation in the city continues to serve the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors as the region grows and new technology impacts the ways we get around.

The community-driven planning process raised several priorities including reducing congestion, improving transit, cut-through traffic, and making transit more useful. This input informed a set of recommendations that will address these needs and improve access to safe and convenient travel choices for all Alexandria.



## Vision

**Safe, seamless, and connected mobility options foster a thriving Alexandria for all.**

## Guiding Principles

**All components of the AMP will advance the vision and guiding principles, which work together to improve transportation choices and ACCESS in Alexandria.**



**Accessible**



**Connected**



**Convenient**



**Equitable**



**Safe**



**Sustainable**





## Plan Chapters



*Transit*



*Smart  
Mobility*



*Streets*



*Pedestrian  
and Bicycle*



*Supporting  
Travel Options*



*Curb Space  
and Parking*



### Why update the AMP?

- Accommodate local and regional population and job growth
- Prepare for new mobility options and emerging technology
- Promote environmental responsibility
- Enhance the focus on equity

The AMP will improve access to safe and convenient travel choices.

### The plan commits the City to:



Apply an early and ongoing equity focus to all aspects of City projects, initiatives, programs, and services from conception through implementation



Make our transportation network flexible and adaptable to factors such as climate change, pandemics, and technological advancements



Be proactive and data-driven in decision-making



Develop partnerships that advance shared goals to serve the community

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## Policies and Strategies

The AMP contains policies and strategies that seek to improve and expand access to transportation choices and key destinations throughout Alexandria. In addition to the policies and strategies listed here, the full draft plan includes specific actions that the City will take to advance the implementation of these strategies.



### Transit

#### Policies

- A. *Make transit greener and more useful:*** Build out a fast and reliable all-day transit network with frequent service that runs on electric buses and serves the entire city, with a focus on areas that will benefit the most Alexandrians, businesses, employees, customers, and visitors.
- B. *Make transit easier to use:*** Increase transportation choices by reducing or eliminating barriers to taking transit.

#### Strategies

1. Implement a citywide transit network with frequent, all-day service.
2. Build out the city's priority transitway corridors and identify improvements on congested, high-ridership corridors to reduce travel times and improve reliability.
3. Transition the City's bus fleet to fully electric, zero-emission vehicles.
4. Improve the rider experience from trip planning, to accessing the stop, riding the bus, and arriving at the destination.
5. Evaluate DASH's fare free service and continue to explore low-income WMATA fares.
6. Support a better connected regional transit network.
7. Modernize the paratransit program for the city's aging population.

## Advancing Transportation Equity

The strategies in the AMP will work to review transit fare policy to ensure transit access for people of all means, use data to ensure that resources are distributed equitably, add more frequent, all-day bus service citywide (particularly in the West End), and create curb space policies to ensure greater access for persons with limited mobility.



## Smart Mobility

### Policies

- A. *Improve safety and efficiency:*** Use technology to manage congestion for safe and efficient city streets and protect the character of neighborhoods.
- B. *Prepare for new technology:*** Plan proactively and flexibly to ensure cost-effective investment in technology that can improve travel choices.

### Strategies

- 1.** Expand smart signal technology to enable detection and real-time signal adjustments.
- 2.** Strategically invest in partnerships to expand City data, technology, and communications capabilities.
- 3.** Upgrade capabilities of the Traffic Management Center to better manage congestion in real-time.
- 4.** Proactively prepare for connected and autonomous vehicles.
- 5.** Develop a framework for pilot projects to test new modes, infrastructure, or initiatives.



## Promoting Choices

The AMP promotes choice through strategies that will:

Make non-auto travel options more efficient and convenient so you can use them for everyday trips

Deploy technology to enable you to make more informed travel choices based on what is fastest or easiest

Provide new travel choices such as ferries

# Reducing Congestion and Cut-Through Traffic

The strategies in the AMP will work to expand use of smart signals to improve traffic flow, mitigate impacts of cut-through traffic on local streets, promote partnerships to support continued telework and flexible work schedules, support more frequent and efficient bus service to attract ridership and reduce traffic, and much more.



## Streets

### Policies

- A. *Protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic:*** Reduce cut-through traffic burdening City neighborhoods.
- B. *Achieve Vision Zero:*** Use data to eliminate traffic-related deaths and serious injuries by 2028.
- C. *Leverage smart mobility:*** Recognizing that driving is important in the City, use Smart Mobility to manage congestion and neighborhood safety.

### Strategies

- 1.** Implement the Vision Zero Action Plan to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2028.
- 2.** Develop a comprehensive program to reduce speeding and cut-through traffic on local streets.
- 3.** Ensure new development minimizes negative impacts to the street network.
- 4.** Work with regional, state, and private sector partners to develop tools to keep traffic on highways and reduce regional cut-through traffic.
- 5.** Consider the use of speed cameras and other automated tools to improve safety.
- 6.** Maintain a state of good repair for our streets using a proactive, data-driven, and equitable approach.







## Pedestrian and Bicycle

### Policies

- A. Prioritize safety:** Focus on vulnerable street user crashes to help achieve Vision Zero.
- B. Address network gaps:** Complete pedestrian and bicycle networks equitably and cost-effectively.

### Strategies

- 1.** Create a safe, well-maintained, and comfortable walking and bicycling environment.
- 2.** Build out a continuous, connected, and accessible pedestrian network that enables people of all ages and abilities to move safely and comfortably.
- 3.** Build out a connected bicycle network of both on- and off-street facilities to benefit cyclists of all ages and abilities.
- 4.** Upgrade or install infrastructure that increases the accessibility of City streets and public spaces for people of all ages and abilities.
- 5.** Educate all street users about safety and traffic laws.





## Supporting Travel Options

### Policies

- A. Enhance choice:** Make it easier for more people to choose an alternative to driving alone.
- B. Promote work flexibility:** Encourage continued telework and flexible schedules to reduce congestion and emissions.
- C. Focus on all trips:** Shift non-commute trips away from driving alone.

### Strategies

- 1. Use information, programs, and encouragement to make it easier for residents and workers to choose options other than driving alone.
- 2. Use the Potomac River to expand transportation options.
- 3. Create mobility hubs.
- 4. Pursue regional approaches to reduce traffic and congestion, particularly during peak times.



## Curb Space and Parking

### Policies

- A. Connect parking policy to City goals:** Achieve broader City goals related to sustainability, congestion, and housing affordability through parking.
- B. Ensure parking availability:** Seek to maintain parking availability in the city's residential and commercial districts, recognizing that some people may need to walk a short distance to their destination.
- C. Promote equitable allocation of curb space:** Treat all curb space as a public asset that should be allocated in an equitable manner for its highest and best use, appropriate for the specific location, time of day, and time of year.

### Strategies

- 1. Implement a prioritization framework for making changes to curb space.
- 2. Consider pricing, regulation, data, and communications to manage parking availability.
- 3. Reconsider parking requirements in new developments.
- 4. Promote electric vehicle charging opportunities.

## AMP Outcomes

Together, the elements of the plan will lead to tangible and measurable progress towards achieving the plan's vision, guiding principles, and citywide goals to improve not just transportation, but also equity and quality of life.



Increased access to high-quality transportation choices for all Alexandrians



More and easier connections to jobs, opportunities, and community destinations



Better overall experience traveling around the city



Reduced number and severity of crashes



Increase in non single-occupant vehicle travel



*Equitable outcomes for all Alexandrians, especially neighborhoods and populations that have been historically underserved*

## How will the AMP help the City?

- Serves as a work plan for staff to improve mobility choices in the community
- Establishes metrics and targets to promote accountability
- Guides transportation decision-making
- Promotes flexibility to adapt to new ideas, technologies, and trends
- Provides a foundation for securing funding to advance existing plans and new projects



## RESOLUTION NO. MPA 2021-00011

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment will amend the **Transportation Master Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan, replacing the chapter in its entirety with the **Alexandria Mobility Plan chapter which includes updates to transportation policies, goals and strategies**;

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning has analyzed the proposed revision and presented its recommendations to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed amendment was held on **October 5, 2021** with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendment is necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of city transportation policies, goals and strategies by adopting the Alexandria Mobility Plan chapter of the 1992 Master Plan, thereby replacing the Transportation Master Plan chapter; and
2. The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the 1992 Master Plan and with the specific goals and objectives set forth in the chapter of the 1992 Master Plan; and
3. The proposed amendment shows the Planning Commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the city, focusing on mobility; and
4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the Alexandria Mobility Plan chapter of the 1992 Master Plan will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:



1. The attached **Alexandria Mobility Plan** is hereby adopted in its entirety amending the 1992 Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia:
2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the 5<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021.

  
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Nathan Macek, Chair  
Alexandria Planning Commission

ATTEST:

  
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Karl Moritz, Secretary